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DE RUEH KI #0596/01 1741622  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 231622Z JUN 09  
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9769  
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY  
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK PRIORITY  
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RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 000596

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/23/2019

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SUBJECT: DR CONGO: KAMBASU NGEVE -- CNDP'S LEADING NANDE

Classified By: CDA Samuel V. Brock for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Serge Kambasu Ngeve is the secretary general of the National Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP) political wing, which has abandoned ethnic Tutsi rebel leader Laurent Nkunda and is now negotiating for a place in the Kinshasa government. Kambasu, an ethnic Nande formerly affiliated with Mbusa Nyamwisi and the Rally for Congolese Democracy-Liberation Movement (RCD-ML), had served as deputy governor of North Kivu's "Grand Nord" when it was a separate province during the 1998-2003 war. He came to Kinshasa with Mbusa at the start of the transition but was arrested in April 2004 for allegedly being too close to Rwanda. Imprisoned for three years, he joined Nkunda in North Kivu immediately after getting out. As CNDP executive secretary, Kambasu was among the most visible of Nkunda's deputies -- his presence demonstrated that the CNDP was not merely a Tutsi organization. Shortly after Nkunda's removal from the leadership and arrest, Kambasu aligned himself with the CNDP political wing under Desire Kamanzi and has since become a prominent voice in the new CNDP. It is rumored that he is being considered for a ministerial post in the next cabinet shake-up, taking the place of Mbusa Nyamwisi, another Nande who is expected to be dropped from the cabinet. Goma poloff and TDY poloff met briefly with Kambasu on June 12.

For the Kigali-Kinshasa detente  
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12. (C) Kambasu spoke strongly in favor of the Rwanda-DRC rapprochement. Like others, he indicated that the root causes of the problems of North Kivu included the migration of Rwandans to the area, the resulting complicated land tenure issues and, following the invasions of Congo/Zaire by Rwanda and Uganda, the deep national distrust between Kinshasa and Kigali. More strongly than most, however, he saw the Rwanda-DRC rapprochement as a prerequisite for lasting peace. The detente could be reinforced by "peaceful collaboration" in joint projects and economic cooperation within the framework of the Economic Community of the Countries of the Great Lakes (CEPGL).

Against Mbusa  
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13. (C) Kambasu was strongly critical of his former boss Mbusa Nyamwisi, who he described as an anti-Tutsi extremist during the elections. For Mbusa, he said, Tutsis were "devils" and Rwandans were "demons." Kambasu said he had known Hema and Tutsis all his life and had always gotten along well with them. But Mbusa believed that making contact

with Tutsis was an act of treason. (Though he did not spell it out, it appears that some kind of unauthorized contact with Rwanda is what got Kambasu sent to jail in 2004.)

Politics too important to be left to the politicians  
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¶4. (C) When asked about his views on former governor Eugene Serufuli and "decoupage" (dividing North Kivu into two parts), Kambasu said that Serufuli was now playing an important role in pacifying the province. First, "the reason he was brought in" was to bring into the peace process the Coalition of Congolese Patriotic Resistance (PARECO), local militias that for two years had opposed the CNDP by force of arms. Kambasu said Serufuli was a figure strong enough to "counter the local political dynamic." In Kambasu's view, the elected politicians were "implicated" in the "crimes" against Tutsis and therefore could not play a role in any political solution. Solutions would have to be imposed by Kinshasa and Kigali with Serufuli's assistance.

On Nkunda  
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¶5. (C) When asked about Nkunda, Kambasu said that he had been one of Nkunda's closest advisors and had remained loyal even after Bosco's "putsch" against Nkunda and Nkunda's arrest by the Rwandans. But while Nkunda had a vision to serve and protect the people of North Kivu, he ultimately did not understand the vision of cooperation with Kinshasa and between Kinshasa and Kigali that would make lasting peace

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possible. Kambasu said that he left Nkunda and joined up with the Kamanzi's CNDP political wing because he did not oppose Rwanda's intervention against the FDLR and he did not oppose the peace process. He was only following his constituents, who want peace and to defeat the FDLR. Notably, he said that he was in regular contact with CNDP commander Sultani Makenga, widely seen as a Nkunda loyalist, and that Makenga is in accord with a policy of CNDP working with the government and cooperating against the FDLR.

¶6. (C) Comment: Kambasu typifies the manner in which alliances and political cooperation have been turned upside down following the rapprochement between the DRC and Rwanda. Someone who was seemingly very loyal to Nkunda, Kambasu clearly recognized the writing on the wall and that a new dynamic between Kigali and Kinshasa, but also within North Kivu, had developed. In this manner, Kambasu strikes us as a pragmatist (or an opportunist). He is certainly a leading candidate to fill "the Nande slot" in the cabinet, when a cabinet re-shuffle is announced. End comment.  
BROCK